

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

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P 290700Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7297

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4546

NEA FOR ATHERTON, PM FOR GELB AND ERICSON

TAGS: GDS

TAGS: MASS TS

SUBJECT: VISIT OF DIRECTOR, DSAA TO TUNIS

REF: CHUSLOT 4489

1. SUMMARY. WE WERE HONORED AND PLEASED TO HAVE HAD LTG FISH, DIRECTOR, DSAA VISIT TUNISIA, 24-26 JUNE. GENERAL FISH WAS THE BEARER OF SOME EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD NEWS TO OUR TUNISIAN FRIENDS (AND TO US AS WELL). WE DISCUSSED FY 77 FMS CREDIT AND POSSIBLE END-OF-YEAR CREDITS; THE CHAPARRAL, VULCAN AND FAAR PURCHASES; AND A GENERAL WRAP-UP OF TUNISIAN MILITARY REQUIREMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. LTG FISH ATTENDED THE TUNISIAN ARMED FORCES 21ST ANNIVERSARY DINNER, VISITED THE TUNISIAN MILITARY ACADEMY, AND WAS MOST WARMLY RECEIVED AT A DINNER FOR HIM, HOSTED BY SEC GEN OF DEFENSE ALOUINI. LTG FISH ADDITIONALLY HELD VERY PROFITABLE DISCUSSIONS WITH DEFENSE MINISTER FARHAT AND HIS DEPUTY, AHMED BENNOUR.

3. GENERAL FISH DISCUSSED THE TUNISIAN FY 77 FMS CREDIT AGREEMENT, INDICATING THAT IT WOULD INDEED BE CONFIDENTIAL

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\$25 MILLION AS WE HAD HOPED. APPARENTLY THE ADDITIONAL \$10 MILLION IN FY 77 CREDIT AUTHORIZATION FOR TUNISIA IS INCLUDED IN THE PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION REQUEST AND WE UNDERSTOOD THAT IT SHOULD BE RECEIVED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE FURTHER UNDERSTAND FROM GENERAL FISH THAT IF GOT DESIRES ADDITIONAL END FY 77 CREDIT, WE CAN HAVE AMBASSADOR HEDDA READY TO SIGN AN ADDITIONAL FMS

CREDIT AGREEMENT BEFORE 30 SEPT. THE TUNISIANS WERE OF COURSE ELATED OVER THIS NEWS WHICH WILL PERMIT THEM TO SIGN THEIR FAAR AND VULCAN (SEE SECSTATE FROM CHUSLOT 4489) LETTER OF OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE (LOA) AS SOON AS THE PAPERWORK CAN GET TO US.

4. WE ALSO INFORMED THE TUNISIANS OF THE 28-MONTH DELIVERY SCHEDULE IN THEIR CHAPARRAL BUY (VICE 30 MONTHS). GENERAL FISH HAND-CARRIED THEIR FAAR RADAR LOA AND DISCUSSED THE REALIZATION OF A COMPLETE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM IN THE 1979 TIME FRAME.

5. GENERAL FISH MENTIONED TO THE TUNISIANS THE POSSIBILITY OF A REDUCTION IN MISSILE COSTS FOR THEIR CHAPARRAL BUY BUT MADE NO FIRM COMMITMENT UNTIL LEGAL CLARIFICATION IS RECEIVED.

6. MINISTERS FARHAT AND BENNOUR, AS WELL AS THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE TUNISIAN ARMED FORCES, WERE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF THE FINE EFFORT OF GENERAL FISH. WE TOO APPRECIATE STATE DEPARTMENT'S BACKING DOD AND HELPING THE TUNISIANS REALIZE THEIR MUCH NEEDED DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS.

7. THE TUNISIANS TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO OUTLINE TO US SOME OF THEIR OUT-YEAR MILITARY HARDWARE REQUIRE-
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MENTS SUCH AS TWO MISSILE AND M48A5 TANKS. WITH GOOD FINANCIAL PLANNING BASED ON THE NEWS OF CREDIT AVAILABILITY, THE TUNISIANS WILL BE WELL ON THE ROAD TO ACHIEVING THEIR MODERNIZATION PROGRAM.

8. MY PERSONAL THANKS TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE FINE SUPPORT IT IS GIVING DEFENSE DEPARTMENT IN ASSISTING TUNISIA. GENERAL FISH'S VISIT WAS ONE OF THE MOST WELCOME AND PROFITABLE WE HAVE HAD.
MULCAHY

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